



**AGC**  
THE CONSTRUCTION  
ASSOCIATION

**July 16, 2025**

# **Veterans' Mental Health in Construction**

***AGC Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Forum***

# Speakers



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# Learning Objectives



1. Identify transferable skills and cultural alignments that make veterans a strong fit for the construction industry.
2. Recognize the mental health challenges commonly experienced by veterans, particularly in the context of high-risk construction environments.
3. Apply strategies and available resources - such as VA support systems and on-site Veterans Resource Groups (VRGs) - to better support veteran employees.
4. Engage with the Construction Veterans Resource System (CVRS) and other initiatives to promote mental health, retention, and career growth for veterans in construction.

# How to Earn CEUs for this Session



1. Attend at least 95% of the session.
2. Additional instructions will be emailed to you after the session.
  - You will be required to complete a session and post-program evaluation as well as a brief assessment with a passing score of 75% or greater.



**0.1 IACET CEU** | The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) is accredited by the International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) and offers IACET CEUs for its learning events that comply with the ANSI/IACET Continuing Education and Training Standard. IACET is recognized internationally as a standard development organization and accrediting body that promotes quality of continuing education and training.



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**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Community Based Interventions for Suicide Prevention: Community Engagement and Partnerships

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*Patrick Bainbridge, LCSW*

*Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator*

*Kansas City VA Medical Center*

# Public Health Strategy

VA's public health strategy combines partnerships with communities to implement tailored, local prevention plans while also focusing on evidence-based clinical strategies for intervention. Our approach focuses on both what we can do now, in the short term, and over the long term, to implement VA's [National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide](#).



## KEY TENETS

1

Suicide is preventable.

2

Suicide prevention requires a public health approach, combining clinical and community-based approaches.

3

Everyone has a role to play in suicide prevention.

# Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator

The CEPC serves a subject matter expert of public health approaches, coalition development and facilitation, and other community-based models for Veteran suicide prevention.

## Key roles of the CEPC:

- Develop, facilitate, and strengthen evidence-informed practices at community, state, and VISN levels
- Collaborate with VA programs and community partners
- Provide leadership for coalition management
- Disseminate program evaluation and surveillance data



# Veteran Suicide Statistics: Count

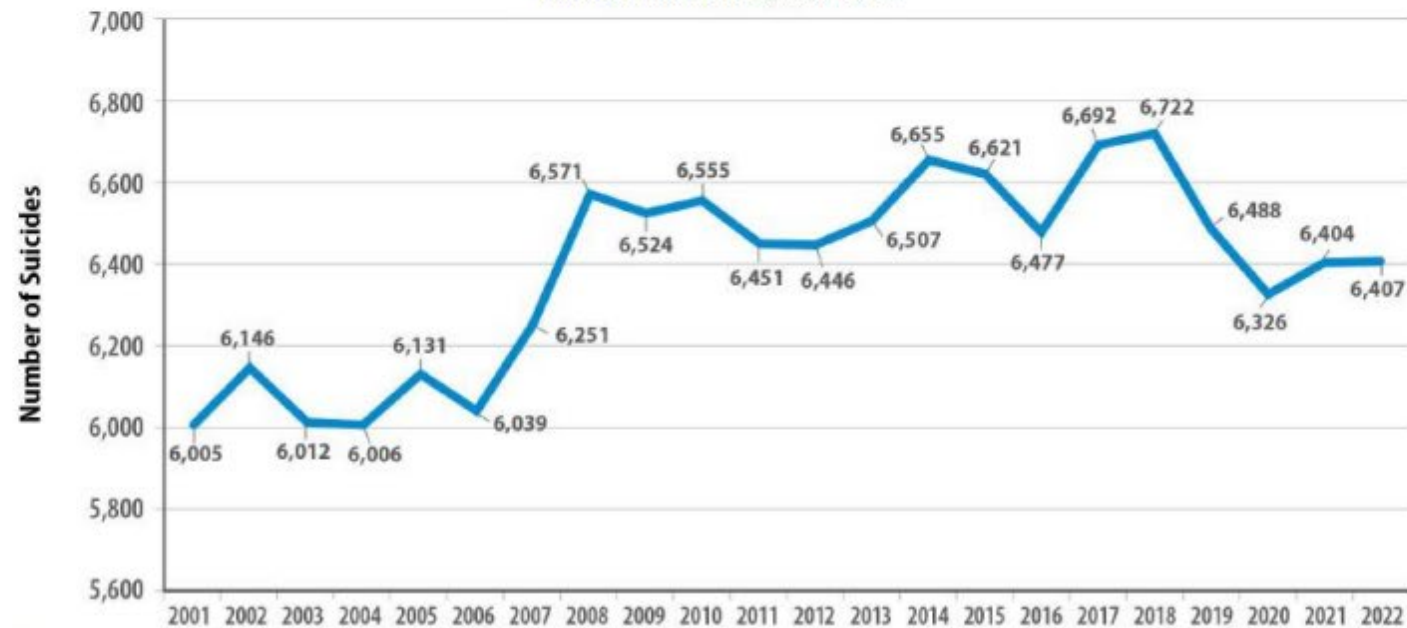
In 2022, there were **6,407** suicides among Veterans and **41,484** among non-Veteran U.S. adults. The number of Veteran suicides in **2022** was lower than 12 of the previous 14 years. The age-adjusted suicide rate for male Veterans rose **1.6%**, which was less than the **1.8%** increase for male non-Veterans. The age-adjusted suicide rate among female Veterans decreased **24.1%**, while the suicide rate among female non-Veterans rose **5.2%**.

## Total Suicides in 2022

**Non-Veteran U.S. Adults**      **41,484**

**Veterans**      **6,407**  
(lower than 10 to 12 previous years)

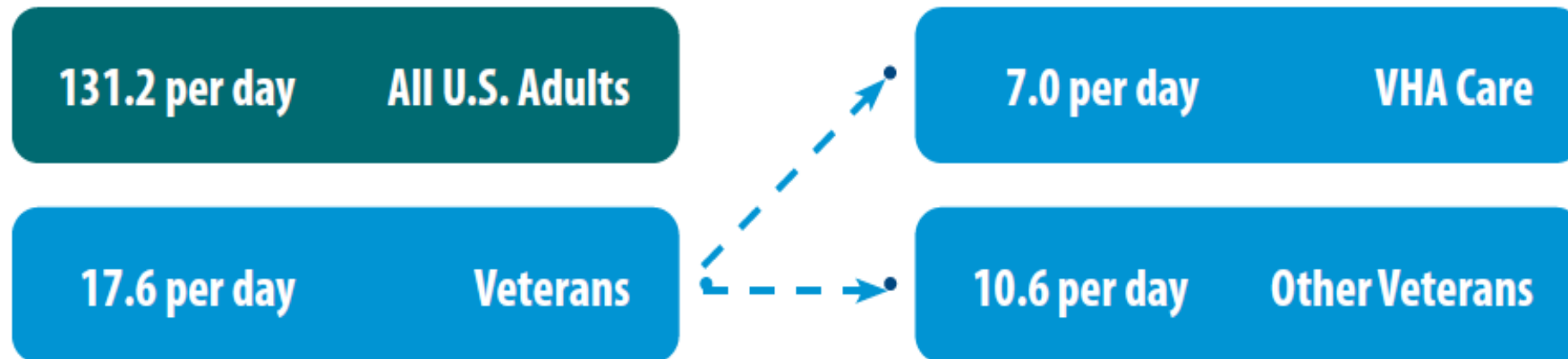
*Veteran Suicide Deaths, 2001–2022*



# Veteran Suicide Statistics: Rates and Averages

In 2022, the unadjusted suicide rate for Veterans was 34.7 per 100,000. It was 13.5 per 100,000 for female Veterans and 37.3 per 100,000 for male Veterans. Among non-Veteran U.S. adults, the suicide rate in 2022 was 17.1 per 100,000, and it was 7.2 per 100,000 for female non-Veteran adults and 28.7 per 100,000 among male non-Veteran adults.

*Average Number of Suicides Per Day*



[https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/data.asp](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/data.asp)

# Supporting Veterans within the Construction Industry

- Currently Veterans make up approximately 6% of the United States Population
  - [https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran\\_population.asp](https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp)
- According to the Dept of Labor Statistics, Veterans comprise approximately 6.5% of the Construction Industry Population.
  - <https://www.sbcacomponents.com/media/chart-veteran-construction-employment-rises>
- Construction is currently within the top 5 of suicide rates among major industry groups.
  - [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7250a2.htm#T1\\_down](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7250a2.htm#T1_down)

# Suicide Prevention is Everyone's Business



# Focused Priority Areas Across CBI-SP Unifying Model



Identify Service Members, Veterans, and their Families and Screen for Suicide Risk



Promote Connectedness and Improve Care Transitions



Increase Lethal Means Safety and Safety Planning

# Why Identify Service Members, Veterans and their Families?

- Community providers indicated that knowing if patients served helps them provide better care and may change diagnosis and treatment of some conditions (Vest et al., 2018).
- More than 50% of Veterans receive care in the civilian sector (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2021c).
- Reintegration from the military to the community may cause a variety of stress-related disorders and challenges for service members and veterans. Identifying and providing services early can help ease these stressors (Elnitsky et al., 2017).

# Why Promote Connectedness?

- Connectedness is the degree to which an individual/group is socially close, interrelated, or shares resources. This includes individuals, families, schools, organizations, neighborhoods, and cultural groups (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011).
- Service members encounter challenges during transition from military to civilian life, such as re-establishing community and developing connectedness (Kintzle et al., 2018).
- Promoting connectedness between individuals and communities protects against suicide (Stone et al., 2017).



*(Stock Image: PowerPoint, Microsoft 365)*



# Why is Lethal Means Safety Important?

- Approximately two-thirds of Veteran deaths by suicide are the result of firearms-inflicted injuries (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2021d).
- One in four female Veterans are gun owners. Female Veterans are more likely to live in a home with firearms and die by suicide compared to their non-Veteran counterparts (Cleveland et al., 2017).
- Firearm ownership is common among Veterans—nearly half of Veterans reside in a household with a firearm (Cleveland et al., 2017).
- One-third of Veteran firearm owners store at least one firearm loaded and unlocked (Simonetti et al., 2018).



# How to Help

- VA's Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinators stand ready to partner with Construction Industry members to support the mental health and well-being of the Veterans within. Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinators are ready to assist industry members with connection to their local VA, suicide prevention training, resource education, benefits information, and implementation of Veteran specific suicide prevention strategies at a grassroots, community level.
- To find your nearest Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator, follow this link, <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/find-resources/local-resources/> and connect with your local VA's Suicide Prevention Coordinator. They will provide a direct connection to the Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator in your area.

# Free, Confidential Support 24/7/365



- Veterans
- Service members
- Family members
- Friends
- Coworkers

# Questions??

Patrick Bainbridge, LCSW

Community Engagement and Partnership Coordinator

[Patrick.Bainbridge@va.gov](mailto:Patrick.Bainbridge@va.gov)


816-562-9559



# **CVRS – Construction Veterans Reducing Suicide**

**A Peer-to-Peer / Tactical Support Network  
Mental Health Program for Military Veterans in  
Construction**



- 
- A construction worker wearing a black hard hat and a high-visibility yellow safety vest over a dark shirt. He is looking off to the side with a serious expression. In the background, an American flag is visible, slightly out of focus. The lighting is warm, suggesting sunset or sunrise.
- Welcome by Shiloh Rowe
  - Purpose of CVRS & Overview of agenda
  - Attendee Introductions
  - Name, branch / company - Why CVRS matters to you

# WELCOME & INTRODUCTION



# Our Mission

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- To empower military veterans working in the construction industry to serve as trained, peer-based advocates for suicide awareness, detection, and prevention—offering a lifeline of support, understanding, and connection on job sites and within their companies.



# How CVRS Works

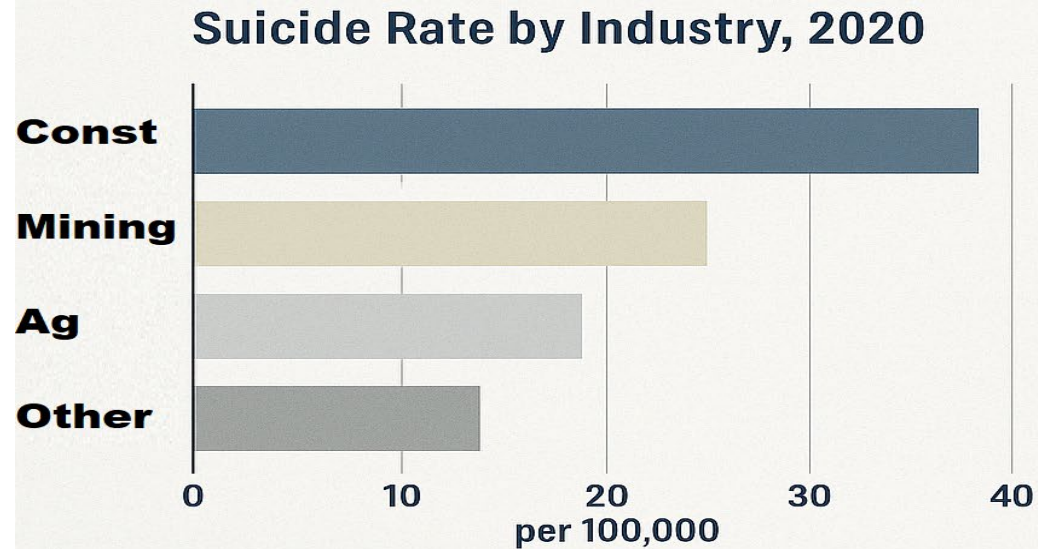
- CVRS equips construction industry veterans to act as mental health liaisons within their companies. Using training resources from the VA (SAVE Training) and AGC of America, CVRS members are 'boots-on-the-ground' support for veterans struggling with mental health and suicidal thoughts.





# SUICIDE AWARENESS

## THE NUMBERS



Construction: Highest  
suicide rate industry

- Veterans: 17–22  
suicides per day

- Dual-Risk Identified  
Individuals (Veterans  
in Construction)



# What We're Here to Do

- - Raise Awareness
- - Forge the Frontline
- - Connect Resources
- - Build a Network
- - Save Lives

# How to Start a CVRS Program (1/3)



- **1. Identify & Unite Veterans**
  - - Host a meet-up or stand-down event
  - - Email outreach to AGC members
- **2. Establish Partnerships**
  - - Learn your own EAP program and process
  - - Contact local VA Suicide Prevention Coordinator
  - - Reach out to local VSOs
  - - Engage mental health providers

# How to Start a CVRS Program (2/3)

- 3. Train the Founding Members
  - - Complete VA SAVE Training
  - - Enroll in AGC Mental Health Course
- 4. Establish Internal CVRS Roles
  - - Liaison for their company
  - - Jobsite mental health champion
  - - Pathfinder



# How to Start a CVRS Program (3/3)



- **5. Promote and Sustain**
  - - Monthly peer meetings (check -ins)
  - - CVRS stickers patches and cards
  - - Annual awareness events
  - - Share updates in AGC newsletters and social media sites

# Sample Message for Recruiting Members

- ★ “Are you a Veteran working in construction? Join our mission to support our brothers and sisters in arms.

**CVRS – Construction Veterans Reducing Suicide** – is building a peer-to-peer support network right here in your region.

Together, we can reduce the stigma, raise awareness, and save lives.

**“Step Forward to Forge The Front Line”**

# Contacts and Resources for Building a Stronger CVRS Program

- **\*\*Contact Info\*\***

- [Shiloh@agcaustin.org](mailto:Shiloh@agcaustin.org) - Austin Chapter Web page : [www.agcaustin.org](http://www.agcaustin.org) -National AGC Web Page: [www.agc.org](http://www.agc.org)

- **- Resources**

***\*\*AGC's Mental Health Resources\*\****

- - Web Page: <https://www.agc.org/mental-health-suicide-prevention>
- - Training Course: 🍌 <https://www.agc.org/industry-priorities/safety-health/mental-health-suicide-prevention/mental-health-suicide-prevention-course>
- Login for continuing the Course- [learning.agc.org](http://learning.agc.org).

- **Join the AGC Mental Health Task Force: As an Ambassador**

Our team of Ambassadors are located across the country and work closely with the Task Force to track local activities, trends, needs, etc. Ambassadors are also available to assist organizations and individuals with questions, concerns, and resources.

- [Bob Kunz](#), Dimeo, Providence, RI | [Email](#) [Jamie Hoelbl](#), True North Consultants, Naperville, IL | [Email](#)
- [Jerry Shupe](#), Hensel Phelps, Greeley, CO | [Email](#) [Kathy Tolleson](#), AGC of Utah, St George, UT | [Email](#)
- [Katie Carrera](#), STOBG- Abbott Const, Seattle, WA | [Email](#) [Lisa Bierer](#), Graham Co, Pennington, NJ | [Email](#)
- [Meredith Baciak](#), Miron Const, Neenah, WI | [Email](#) [Scott Staffon](#), Holmes Murphy Const, Minneapolis, MN | [Email](#)
- If you are unable to connect with an ambassador, please contact Nazia Shah at [nazia.shah@agc.org](mailto:nazia.shah@agc.org).

- **-VA -Veteran Suicide Awareness Training:** <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/>

- <https://learn.psycharmor.org/courses/va-save>
- [https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide\\_prevention/docs/VA\\_SAVE\\_Training.pdf](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/docs/VA_SAVE_Training.pdf)
- <https://facethefight.psycharmor.org/courses/face-the-fight-basics>

- 

***\*\* “ You never completed a mission on your own, that doesn't change now that you have a mission at home”***


# Wallet Card / Quick Access #'s



**CVRS**

Construction -C- Challenge  
Veterans -V- Validate  
Reducing -R- Reassure  
Suicide -S- Signs

**- TACTICAL SUPPORT NETWORK -  
BY AND FOR CONSTRUCTION  
INDUSTRY VETERANS**



**CONTINUE  
YOUR MISSION.**


EAP #: \_\_\_\_\_


LOCAL VA #: \_\_\_\_\_

VSO #: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vet Crisis Hotline:**

☎ 988\*1     *Free, 24/7  
Online Chat!*

💬 83825    



# THANK YOU